

## Claims

- [c1] A method for operating a computer, said method comprising the steps of:  
receiving meter data related to equipment usage;  
applying validation rules to the meter data; and  
generating an error report identifying meter data that violates at least one of  
the validation rules.
- [c2] A method according to Claim 1 wherein the meter data is received in a  
predefined format.
- [c3] A method according to Claim 2 wherein the meter data is contained in an  
export file containing at least one of asset serial number, model number,  
meter reading date, an invoice number, amount of receivable, customer  
name, coverage begin date, coverage end date, and service credits.
- [c4] A method according to Claim 1 wherein the meter data is received via the  
Internet.
- [c5] A method according to Claim 1 wherein the validation rules comprise at least  
one of asset or serial number not found; serial number or serial  
number/model number are not unique; the account is not active; current  
meter date is not a valid date; current meter date is more than 30 days ago;  
current meter date is less than previous meter date; current meter date must  
be within 2–5 days of the expected meter date; invalid current meter  
reading; current meter reading less than previous meter reading; dealer  
provide meter credits; calculated overage charges by dealer does not equal  
preset amount; excess amount is greater than \$1500; if consolidated  
account, all assets readings not received in file; duplicate readings.
- [c6] A method according to Claim 1 wherein generating an error report comprises  
the steps of flagging the data associated with an error in a database, and  
prompting a user to correct the data.
- [c7] A method according to Claim 6 further comprising the step of determining  
whether an error is due to received meter data.

- [c8] A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of providing that the error report is accessible via a web site and notifying a dealer that corrections are awaiting input.
- [c9] A method according to Claim 8 wherein the error report lists rejected data records, an explanation of the reason the record was rejected, and the file name and date the record was sent.
- [c10] A method for operating a computer, said method comprising the steps of:  
generating invoices related to equipment usage;  
applying received payment to open invoices; and  
creating a payables data file, said file comprising at least one of check number, check amount, payment detail by asset, service payment breakdown by base service and overage charges, dealer invoice number and customer name.
- [c11] A method according to Claim 10 further comprising the step of prompting a user to modify certain data in said payables data file.
- [c12] A method according to Claim 11 wherein prompting a user to modify certain data comprises the step of prompting a user to access the payment information, review each data record, flag each record for release, or hold and then edit any of the held records prior to releasing.
- [c13] A computer programmed to:  
receive meter data related to equipment usage;  
apply validation rules to the meter data; and  
generate an error report identifying meter data that violates at least one of the validation rules.
- [c14] A computer according to Claim 13 wherein the meter data is contained in an export file containing at least one of asset serial number, model number, meter reading date, an invoice number, amount of receivable, customer name, coverage begin date, coverage end date, and service credits.

- [c15] A computer according to Claim 13 wherein the validation rules comprise at least one of asset or serial number not found; serial number or serial number/model number are not unique; the account is not active; current meter date is not a valid date; current meter date is more than 30 days ago; current meter date is less than previous meter date; current meter date must be within 2–5 days of the expected meter date; invalid current meter reading; current meter reading less than previous meter reading; dealer provide meter credits; calculated overage charges by dealer does not equal preset amount; excess amount is greater than \$1500; if consolidated account, all assets readings not received in file; duplicate readings. Each data record that passes all validation rules is then processed in the mainframe system for invoicing the lessee for the service payment.
- [c16] A computer according to Claim 13 wherein generating an error report comprises flagging the data associated with an error in a database, and prompting a user to correct the data.
- [c17] A computer according to Claim 13 further programmed to provide that the error report is accessible via a web site and notify a dealer that corrections are awaiting input.
- [c18] A computer according to Claim 13 further programmed to:  
generate invoices related to equipment usage;  
apply received payment to open invoices; and  
create a payables data file, said file comprising at least one of check number, check amount, payment detail by asset, service payment breakdown by base service and overage charges, dealer invoice number and customer name.
- [c19] A database comprising:  
an export file data containing at least one of asset serial number, model number, meter reading date, an invoice number, amount of receivable, customer name, coverage begin date, coverage end date, and service credits;  
and  
a payables data file comprising at least one of check number, check amount,

payment detail by asset, service payment breakdown by base service and overage charges, dealer invoice number and customer name.

[c20] A database according to Claim 19 further comprising validation rules, said validation rules comprising at least one of asset or serial number not found; serial number or serial number/model number are not unique; the account is not active; current meter date is not a valid date; current meter date is more than 30 days ago; current meter date is less than previous meter date; current meter date must be within 2–5 days of the expected meter date; invalid current meter reading; current meter reading less than previous meter reading; dealer provide meter credits; calculated overage charges by dealer does not equal preset amount; excess amount is greater than \$1500; if consolidated account, all assets readings not received in file; duplicate readings.

[c21] A database according to Claim 19 further comprising an error report is accessible via a web site and notify a dealer that corrections are awaiting input.

[c22] A database according to Claim 19 further comprising a payables data file comprising at least one of check number, check amount, payment detail by asset, service payment breakdown by base service and overage charges, dealer invoice number and customer name.

[c23] A system comprising:  
a database comprising an export file data containing at least one of asset serial number, model number, meter reading date, an invoice number, amount of receivable, customer name, coverage begin date, coverage end date, and service credits, and a payables data file comprising at least one of check number, check amount, payment detail by asset, service payment breakdown by base service and overage charges, dealer invoice number and customer name; and  
a server configured to receive meter data related to equipment usage, apply validation rules to the meter data, and generate an error report identifying

meter data that violates at least one of the validation rules.

[c24] A system according to Claim 23 wherein said database further comprises validation rules comprising at least one of asset or serial number not found; serial number or serial number/model number are not unique; the account is not active; current meter date is not a valid date; current meter date is more than 30 days ago; current meter date is less than previous meter date; current meter date must be within 2–5 days of the expected meter date; invalid current meter reading; current meter reading less than previous meter reading; dealer provide meter credits; calculated overage charges by dealer does not equal preset amount; excess amount is greater than \$1500; if consolidated account, all assets readings not received in file; duplicate readings.

[c25] A system according to Claim 23 wherein said database further comprises an error report is accessible via a web site and notify a dealer that corrections are awaiting input.

[c26] A system according to Claim 23 wherein generating an error report comprises flagging the data associated with an error in a database, and prompting a user to correct the data.

[c27] A system according to Claim 23 wherein said server is further configured to provide that the error report is accessible via a web site and notify a dealer that corrections are awaiting input.

[c28] A system according to Claim 23 wherein said server is further configured to: generate invoices related to equipment usage; apply received payment to open invoices; and create a payables data file, said file comprising at least one of check number, check amount, payment detail by asset, service payment breakdown by base service and overage charges, dealer invoice number and customer name.

[c29] Apparatus comprising:  
means for receiving meter data related to equipment usage;

means for applying validation rules to the meter data; and  
means for generating an error report identifying meter data that violates at least one of the validation rules.

[c30] Apparatus according to Claim 29 wherein the meter data is contained in an export file containing at least one of asset serial number, model number, meter reading date, an invoice number, amount of receivable, customer name, coverage begin date, coverage end date, and service credits.

[c31] Apparatus according to Claim 29 wherein the validation rules comprise at least one of asset or serial number not found; serial number or serial number/model number are not unique; the account is not active; current meter date is not a valid date; current meter date is more than 30 days ago; current meter date is less than previous meter date; current meter date must be within 2-5 days of the expected meter date; invalid current meter reading; current meter reading less than previous meter reading; dealer provide meter credits; calculated overage charges by dealer does not equal preset amount; excess amount is greater than \$1500; if consolidated account, all assets readings not received in file; duplicate readings. Each data record that passes all validation rules is then processed in the mainframe system for invoicing the lessee for the service payment.

[c32] Apparatus according to Claim 29 wherein said means for generating an error report comprises means for flagging the data associated with an error in a database, and means for prompting a user to correct the data.

[c33] Apparatus according to Claim 29 further comprising means for providing that the error report is accessible via a web site and notify a dealer that corrections are awaiting input.

[c34] Apparatus according to Claim 29 further comprising:  
means for generating invoices related to equipment usage;  
means for applying received payment to open invoices; and  
means for creating a payables data file, said file comprising at least one of

check number, check amount, payment detail by asset, service payment breakdown by base service and overage charges, dealer invoice number and customer name.

- [c35] Apparatus according to Claim 34 wherein said payable file further includes a header record that identifies which data elements should be used by OMD Task 1Y to match the data in the payable data file to the dealer's payable data in the OMD software.
- [c36] A computer-readable medium executable by a computer for controlling the computer to:  
receive meter data related to equipment usage;  
apply validation rules to the meter data; and  
generate an error report identifying meter data that violates at least one of the validation rules.
- [c37] A computer-readable medium according to Claim 36 wherein to generate an error report, said computer is controlled to associate a flag with a data error and prompt a user to correct the data.
- [c38] A computer-readable medium according to Claim 36 wherein the computer is further controlled to provide that the error report is accessible via a web site and notify a dealer that corrections are awaiting input.
- [c39] A computer-readable medium according to Claim 36 wherein the computer is further controlled to:  
generate invoices related to equipment usage;  
apply received payment to open invoices; and  
create a payables data file, said file comprising at least one of check number, check amount, payment detail by asset, service payment breakdown by base service and overage charges, dealer invoice number and customer name.
- [c40] A method for operating a computer, said method comprising the steps of:  
receiving meter data related to equipment usage;  
applying validation rules to the meter data;

associating an error identifier to each data entry that violates a validation rule; and  
storing, in electronic memory, the error identifier and associated data entry.

[c41] A method according to Claim 40 further comprising the step of generating a meter correction report identifying the data that violates a validation rule.

[c42] A method according to Claim 41 further comprising the step of receiving an updated meter correction report, and applying corrections contained in the updated report to data stored in the electronic memory.

[c43] A method according to Claim 42 further comprising the step of applying validation rules to data contained in the updated meter correction report.

[c44] A system comprising:  
a database configured to store a meter correction report;  
a server communicatively coupled to said database and to a wide area network, said server configured to apply validation rules to meter data contained in the meter correction report, said server further configured to associate an error identifier with meter data in the meter correction report that violates a validation rule;  
a device coupled to said wide area network and operable to access the meter correction report so that data associated with an error identifier can be updated using said device.

[c45] A system according to Claim 44 wherein said server is configured to transmit a notification to the device if an error identifier is associated with data in the meter correction report.